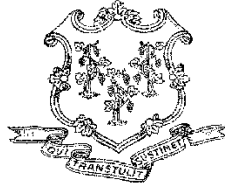


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Good Morning Sen. Flexer, Rep. Fox and members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee. I would like to express my support for SB 753, AN ACT CONCERNING THE COUNTING OF INCARCERATED PERSONS FOR PURPOSES OF DETERMINING LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS.

SB 753 addresses the problem of prison-based population attribution in which inmates at the various correctional facilities are counted as residents of the towns in which the facilities are located rather than the actual town of residence of the inmate prior to incarceration. In general, these inmates intend to return their original domiciles upon release. It would appear that under Connecticut statute Sec. 9-14 and 9-14a the current practice of apportioning prisoners in the municipality in which they are incarcerated is not consistent with our law<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> **Sec. 9-14 Electors residing in state institutions.** No person shall be deemed to have lost his residence in any town by reason of his absence therefrom in any institution maintained by the state. No person who resides in any institution maintained by the state shall be admitted as an elector in the town in which such institution is located, unless he proves to the satisfaction of the admitting official that he is a bona fide resident of such institution.

**Sec. 9-14a. Electors in custody of state.** Any person in the custody of the state being held at a community correctional center or a

The current system adversely affects our cities. As I stated in regard to a similar bill in 2011, less than 20% of the state's population lives in Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, New Britain, Stamford or Waterbury, but more than half of the state's prisoners come from those 6 cities. The 5 towns that contain the majority (60%) of the state's inmate population, Cheshire, East Lyme, Enfield, Somers and Suffield are the domicile for less than 1% of the state's prisoners. The situation does not appear to have changed.<sup>2</sup> As Scott X. Esdaile of the NAACP observed in 2020 "a New Haven resident's vote for state offices in the 2020 election will count for only 85% of the vote of a resident in Enfield or Somers. Why? Because for every 85 residents of House District 59 (Enfield), there are over 100 in House District 97 (New Haven)<sup>3</sup>."

Various state aid formulas are derived from census based population; the towns where the prisons are located are allocated dollars for services which they will never provide because once the inmates are released, they return to their town of residence. Either the towns in which the prisons are located should provide housing and other services for the inmates upon release or the dollars should go to the released inmates' actual town of residence. The towns with state prisons already receive state PILOT

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correctional institution, whose voting rights have not been denied, shall be deemed to be absent from the town or city of which he is an inhabitant for purposes of voting, notwithstanding that such center or institution may be situated within such town or city.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.prisonersofthecensus.org/factsheets/ct/ct.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.courant.com/opinion/op-ed/hc-op-esdaile-prison-gerrymandering-0308-20200306-ayets53otfdo7mtcqmfe57ddnm-story.html>

funding to reimburse them for property tax dollars they would receive if the prisons were privately owned land. They should not then receive additional money based on an artificially elevated population count.